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S.C. REFUSES STAY ON PATNA HC ORDER NIXING HIKE IN CASTE-BASED QUOTA

The D Y Chandrachud-led bench, however, agreed to hear 10 petitions of the Bihar govt against the Patna High Court's adverse verdict

NO INTERIM RELIEF, FINAL HEARING IN SEPT

The SC said it will list the petitions for final hearing in September. "We will list in September. No interim relief [at this stage]," CJI Chandrachud said. The HC had on June 20 set aside Bihar's amended reservation laws that raised the quotas for Dalits, tribals, and backward classes from 50% to 65% in public employment and educational institutions, saying it violated the Consititulon

HC ORDER ERRONEOUS, CLAIMS BIHAR GOVT

- In its plea before the SC, the Bihar government termed the HC order erroneous, claiming it transcended beyond the legitimate scope of judicial review by substituting 'opinion of State' with its own opinion | **P9**
- The Nitish Kumar-led government's amendments followed a caste survey, which put OBCs and EBCs at 63% and SC/STs at 21% of Bihar's population

50%

CAP ON RESERVATIONS LAID DOWN BY THE TOP COURT IN THE INDRA SAWHNEY CASE

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

Sarabjot Singh and Manu Bhaker advanced to the bronze-medal playoff in the mixed 10m air pistol event on Monday. If the duo finishes third, Bhaker will become the first Indian to win two medals at a single Olympic Games | AP | P15

Chakravyuh rap by Rahul to put the Centre on the mat

Uses Mahabharat metaphor to pin down govt, says Budget hasn't addressed people's concerns

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

MAKING a strong pitch for caste census and legalised minimum support price (MSP) for crops, Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi in his fierce speech in the Lok Sabha on Monday argued that the Union Budget had failed to address the needs of poor and the marginalised communities.

In an hour-long speech during the discussion on the Union Budget, the Congress leader invoked the Mahabharat to allege that the *chakravyuh* of six persons had trapped the country, which led to an uproar. "In the 21st century, there is a new *chakravyuh* and that symbol is worn by the prime minister on his chest. What was done with Abhimanyu is being done with youth, women, farmers and the MSMEs.

"This *chakravyuh* attacked and destroyed small and medium businesses. This was done through demonetisation and tax terrorism. The Budget did nothing to end this tax terrorism," Rahul said.

In his all out attack, Rahul said by removing indexation, the BJP stabbed the middle class in the back and by enhancing long-term capital gains tax, it stabbed the middle class in the front. He claimed the INDIA bloc would pass bills on caste census and legal guarantee for MSP if it captures power.

The House witnessed uproar after Rahul displayed a picture of the 'halwa ceremony' held ahead of the Budget. "I wanted the budget to take up the caste census. Though the Budget was prepared by a 20-member committee, no Dalits, OBCs or Adivasis were in the picture," he said, prompting intervention from Speaker Om Birla, who asked him to read the rules of the House, Parliamentary Affairs minister Kiren Rijiju echoed Birla.

"*Chakravyuh* has three forces. First is the idea of monopoly, that two people should be allowed to own everything in India. One element is financial power. Second is the institutions, agencies (CBI, ED, I-T) and the third element is political executive," Rahul added.

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi speaks in the Lok Sabha on Monday | PTI

> **In the 21st century, another *chakravyuh* has been prepared... What was done with Abhimanyu is being done with India, with its youth, women, farmers**
>
> Rahul Gandhi

HEATED EXCHANGES

There were heated exchanges between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Rahul over the latter's remarks that youth have been trapped in the Agniveer *chakravyuh* and that there are no provisions in Budget for pensions for Agniveers

CM, DCM visit to Delhi: Possible change of guard in Karnataka?

BALA CHAUHAN @Bengaluru

WITH Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM DK Shivakumar being summoned to New Delhi on Tuesday to meet the Congress high command, there are murmurs that "there could be a discussion on the possible change in guard in Karnataka," said well-placed sources privy to behind-the-scene developments in the ruling party of the state.

"The name of a senior, popular Congress leader has reportedly been sounded out as the next CM in the inner circles of the party, though no formal discussions have taken place even outside the inner ring," they said.

Sources, who didn't wish to be named, said the Congress high command has taken "serious cognizance" of the ongoing controversies regarding the alleged Valmiki Development Corporation scam – diverting funds meant for SC/ST to finance the guarantee schemes – and Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) irregularities – allotment for sites in the name of Siddaramaiah's wife – which reportedly implicate Siddaramaiah, although so far there is nothing to prove his involvement. He has on various platforms denied his involvement, and has even constituted a single-member inquiry commission to investigate the allegations of irregularities in the land allocated by MUDA.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, accompanied by DCM D K Shivakumar and ministers, offers bagina at KRS dam on Monday | EXPRESS

The alleged scams rocked both Houses of the Legislature for the entire monsoon session, and now the Opposition – the BJP-JDS combine – has decided to hold a week-long padayatra (foot march) from Bengaluru to Mysuru from August 3 to 10 over the alleged MUDA scam for which the Congress government has denied permission. CONTINUED ON: P5

EAM: No third-party mediation in China border dispute

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

INDIA-China relations are not great at the moment and there are ongoing border disputes. However, that doesn't mean New Delhi is looking for third-party mediation, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in Tokyo on Monday.

"We have a problem, (but) it is for the two of us to talk it over and to find a way," Jaishankar said while talking to reporters at a press conference in Tokyo on the sidelines of the Quad foreign ministers' meet.

Recalling his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi twice this month, Jaishankar said: "Obviously, other countries in the world would have an interest in the matter, because we are two big countries and the state of our relationship has an impact on the rest of the world. But we are not looking to other countries to sort out what is really an issue between us."

Meanwhile, the joint statement issued after the foreign ministers' meeting targeted China's expansionist policies. In a clear message to Beijing, it said one country cannot dominate others. "All countries have a role in contributing to regional peace, stability, and prosperity, while seeking a region in which no country dominates and no country is dominated, competition is managed responsibly, and each country is free from coercion in all its forms and can exercise its agency to determine its own future," the statement said.

SC nixes ED plea, says order on Soren bail well reasoned

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Monday refused to interfere with a Jharkhand High Court order granting the state's Chief Minister Hemant Soren bail in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam. While dismissing the Enforcement Directorate's plea challenging the HC's June 28 order, a bench of justices B R Gavai and K V Viswanathan termed HC's order 'very well reasoned', adding: "We don't want to observe anything more... if we observe, you (ED) might be in difficulty."

The SC, however, added that the observations made by the HC while granting bail to Soren should not influence the trial court in the case.

During the hearing in the SC, Additional Solicitor General S V Raju, appearing for the ED, claimed the probe agency has evidence to show the CM's office was directly dealing with the issue concerning the land in question.

The bench observed that the HC considered these aspects before granting bail.

In Ranchi, Soren welcomed the SC order. He claimed his imprisonment was orchestrated. He lamented the wasted time during his five-month incarceration, stressing that many important issues could have been addressed.

Krishna river floods B'gavi, Raichur, Bagalkot

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Belagavi

INCESSANT rain lashing several areas along the Karnataka-Maharashtra, particularly Belagavi district, is expected to cause massive floods as the levels of Krishna river and its tributaries are swelling drastically.

Already, thousands of families have been shifted to relief centres in flood-prone areas of Belagavi district and 45 bridges have submerged as 2.43 lakh cusec of water has been discharged from Maharashtra's dams into the Krishna river on Monday.

Sources said that since the onset of monsoon, five people have died and over 500 houses have been damaged in rural Belagavi. Crops in 26,674 hectare in Belagavi district too have been destroyed.

Gokak town inundated due to heavy rainfall over the weekend | EXPRESS

Though the Almatti dam level is at 55%, the outflow was 3,13,920 cusecs against an inflow of 2,71,385 cusecs on Monday. In Ghataprabha, outflow was 40,393 cusecs against an inflow of 47,420 cusecs. The dam is 92% full.

In all, residents of 28 villages, affected by overflows from the Hippargi barrage near Jamkhandi, have been reportedly compensated and rehabilitated. But farmers continue to live in these villages because of financial constraints, while the government is doing its best to rescue flood-affected people.

As on Sunday, the busy Lolsur bridge in Gokak was flooded, while hundreds of houses in Mutton Market, Kumbar Oni, Uppar Oni, Bhojgar Galli and Kalal Galli were inundated. Floods in Gokak, however, subsided on Monday afternoon.

As many roads and bridges in Khanapur and Chikkodi taluks were flooded on Monday, the local administration had to divert vehicles to alternative routes. Belagavi DC Mohammed Roshan declared a holiday for schools and PU colleges in most of the rain-affected areas of Belagavi district last week. CONTINUED ON: P5

EXPRESS READ

FSSAI: Meat at KSR rly stn was of goat, not dog

Bengaluru: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has confirmed that the meat samples collected from the KSR Railway Station on Friday, was only goat meat, refuting claims of any dog meat consumption. The meat was from Sirohi goat, a breed from Kutch in Gujarat and Rajasthan | P3

5 more held in coaching centre flooding incident

New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Monday arrested five more people, including an SUV owner and four co-owners of the basement of a four-storey building where three IAS aspirants died after it was flooded following heavy rain. With these arrests, the total number of arrests has risen to seven.

Pilot study of sat-based toll collection on B'luru-Mysuru highway in August

AKNISREE KARTHIK @ Bengaluru

THE pilot study of a satellite-based toll collection system will soon commence on the Bengaluru-Mysuru national highway. The Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) is set to do away with toll booths across the country and replace the existing Fastag-based toll collection.

A senior official from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) told *TNIE*, "Of the two highways selected for the pilot study in India, the Bengaluru-Mysuru highway in Karnataka is also one. Preparations are on for trials that are expected to start soon, anytime in August. Indian Highways Management Company Ltd (IHMCL), a company promoted by NHAI, is looking into GNSS."

The pilot will be taken up only on a particular stretch of the Bengaluru-Mysuru highway, the official said, clarifying that the existing Fastag-based toll collection will continue, adding that even after the full-fledged rollout, till the people shift to GNSS, there will be toll booths.

Explaining how the toll will be deducted under GNSS, the official said, "Geo-fencing of the highway will be done. Once a vehicle enters the highway, a software will detect its entry through the GPS device fitted in the vehicle. Once the vehicle exits the highway, it will calculate the distance travelled from the entry and exit and deduct the toll as how it's done under the existing system." P2

HOUSING SCHEME

Muslims biggest beneficiaries among minorities

HOUSES SANCTIONED TO THE MINORITIES UNDER THE PMAY-U SCHEME

PARVEZ SULTAN @ New Delhi

A Rajya Sabha question seeking to quantify the beneficiaries among the minorities under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) threw up an interesting bunch of data.

The government's written response to the unstarred question last week said Muslims constitute 12.74% of the total pucca houses sanctioned for the minorities under the scheme launched in 2015 across the country. The overall figure for minorities under the scheme stood at 15.15%.

In all, 1.18 crore houses were approved by the government, of which 1.14 crore units have already been grounded for construction. And 85.04 lakh units have already been completed or delivered.

Of the 16 lakh houses sanctioned for the minorities, the share of Muslims is 13.45 lakh. Christians came a distant second with 1.73 lakh houses (1.64%). Sikhs have been sanctioned 49,670 houses (0.47%) and Buddhists 19,707 (0.19).

Jains and Zoroastrians were at the bottom of the list with 10,457 dwelling units (0.10%) and 1,127 (0.01%), respectively.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs released the data on July 22 in response to a question by Satnam Singh Sandhu, Chancellor of Chandigarh University and nominated member of the Rajya Sabha.

The Centre is set to launch PMAY-U 2.0 to address the housing needs of 1 crore urban poor and middle class families with an investment of ₹10 lakh crore. "This will include a Central assistance of ₹2.2 lakh crore in the next five years," finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced in her Budget speech.